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THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL *Organization*

Statutory Provisions

The National Security Council was established pursuant to Public Law 253, Title I, Section 101, 80th Congress, approved July 26, 1947, as amended by Section 3 of Public Law 216, 81st Congress, approved August 10, 1949, and by Section 501(e) of Public Law 165, 82nd Congress, approved October 10, 1951. By Reorganization Plan No. 4, effective August 20, 1949, the Council was transferred to the Executive Office of the President.

The statutory function of the Council is to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security. Subject to direction by the President, it is the responsibility of the Council to assess and appraise the objectives, commitments and risks of the United States in relation to our actual and potential military power, to consider policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with national security, and to make such recommendations and such other reports to the President as it deems appropriate or as the President may require.

According to statutory provisions the Council is composed of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director, Office of Defense Mobilization. Secretaries and Under Secretaries of other executive departments and of the military departments may be appointed to the Council by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve at his pleasure. By law, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are the principal military advisers to the National Security Council. In addition, the Central Intelligence Agency is, by law, under the direction of the National Security Council and is the intelligence adviser to the Council. The statute also provides that the Council shall have a Staff headed by a civilian Executive Secretary appointed by the President, with such other personnel as may be authorized by the Council.

Basis of the Council's Organization

The concept of the National Security Council is that of an advisory staff for the President on all major policies affecting the national security. Accordingly, the Council performs its functions of advising the President by submitting for his consideration policy recommendations representing an integrated assessment and appraisal of our over-all objectives, commitments and risks in the light of our military and other capabilities. These recommendations represent the coordination of the various points of view of all appropriate executive departments and agencies.

The Council's work is accordingly governed by the following basic concepts:

a. The NSC deals only with issues affecting the national security.

b. The NSC is advisory; by advice and recommendations to the President, it aids him to resolve the executive will, performing whatever functions he thinks would be most helpful to him in this respect.

c. The NSC seeks to integrate domestic, foreign and military policies so as to enable Government agencies to cooperate more effectively in national security matters.

d. The NSC acts, according to Presidential direction, to coordinate more effectively policies and functions of Government agencies relating to the national security.

e. The NSC is concerned with both our actual and our potential military power.

f. The NSC is not limited to areas of agency agreement; on its own initiative, NSC may seek out areas of agency conflict or omission to act, so as to present alternative or new courses of action for executive decision.

Under the direction of the National Security Council is a Central Intelligence Agency headed by a Director of Central Intelligence. The Operations Coordinating Board was established by Executive Order of September 3, 1953, to provide for the integrated implementation of national security policies by the several agencies. The Board reports to the National Security Council. Under the NSC the Interdepartmental Intelligence Conference is responsible for the coordination

of the investigation of all domestic espionage, counter-espionage, sabotage, subversion and other related intelligence matters affecting internal security. Also under the NSC, the Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security is responsible for coordinating all phases of the internal security field other than the functions under the purview of the IIC.

Present Organization

On March 17, 1953, the President approved the following recommendations for strengthening the National Security Council:

In order to make possible a genuine exchange of ideas and foster free discussion, it is planned as a general rule not to have more than eight persons who have the right formally to participate as Council members. This number includes Statutory Members and standing-request and ad hoc Participant Members; but does not include Advisers, Observers, and the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and NSC Staff members.

1. Statutory or Standing-Request Members:

The President, Chairman	The Secretary of De-
The Vice President	fense
The Secretary of State	The Director, Office
The Secretary of the Treasury	of Defense Mobili-
	zation

2. Participant Members:

In addition to the above Members, the President invites such other officials of Government to attend as Participant Members, as his convenience and the agenda items at a particular Meeting make desirable. Such invitations are either on standing-request or ad hoc basis. A standing-request Participant Member attends all meetings until the President otherwise decides. At the invitation of the President, the Director, Bureau of the Budget, and the Special Assistant to the President on Disarmament now attend all Council meetings. An ad hoc Participant Member attends only such Meeting or part of a Meeting as he is specifically invited to attend.

3. Advisers, Observers, Staff:

In addition to Statutory and Participant Members, there are in attendance at each Council meeting the following

persons who do not formally participate as Council Members:

- a. Advisers: The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence
Special Assistants to the President
(Mr. Joseph M. Dodge and Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller)
- b. Observers: Such person or persons as the President desires to attend for the purpose of observing, but not participating
- c. Staff: The Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
The Executive Secretary, NSC
The Deputy Executive Secretary, NSC

4. Civilian Consultants and Civilian Committees:

In order to bring to the Council deliberations a fresh, frequently-changing civilian point of view and to gain public understanding of national security problems through the use of civilians of stature, from time to time the President may appoint on an ad hoc basis one or more Civilian Consultants or small Civilian Committees as informal Advisers to the Council. As a general rule, a Civilian Consultant does not formally participate in a Council meeting and a Civilian Committee appears at a Council meeting only when its report is presented.

5. Executive Officers of the Council:

The Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs is the principal executive officer of the National Security Council and serves as the Chairman of the Council's Planning Board (described below). He does not have status as a Statutory or Participant Member or preside at Council Meetings. He is appointed by the President on the White House Staff.

Under the supervision of the Special Assistant, the Executive Secretary is the head of the NSC Staff, acts for the Special Assistant in his absence, and advises and aids him in the performance of his duties. The Deputy Executive Secretary similarly acts for and assists the Executive Secretary, and supervises the NSC Special Staff (described below). The Executive Secretary and the other members of the NSC Staff are compensated from the separate appropriation for the National Security Council.

6. Planning Board of the Council:

The Planning Board is the principal body for formulation and transmission of policy recommendations to the Council and, in carrying out this responsibility, performs the following functions:

a. Anticipates and identifies problems and situations affecting the security objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States, and initiates action to provide the required analyses and draft policy statements for the consideration of the Council.

b. Facilitates the formulation of policies, during the process of drafting policy recommendations, by marshaling the resources of the respective departments and agencies; by identifying the possible alternatives; by endeavoring to achieve acceptable agreements; by discussing differences; by avoiding undesirable compromises which conceal or gloss over real differences; and by reducing differences to as clearly defined and narrow an area as possible prior to reference to the Council. The membership of the Planning Board consists of the following:

Members: Special Assistant to the President
(Chairman)
Department of State
Department of the Treasury
Department of Defense
Office of Defense Mobilization
Office of the Special Assistant to the President on Disarmament

Advisers: Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Central Intelligence Agency
Operations Coordinating Board
Bureau of the Budget

Staff: Executive Secretary, NSC
Deputy Executive Secretary, NSC
Coordinator, Board Assistants

The Planning Board is assisted by the Board Assistants, officials designated by the respective members of the Planning Board and headed by a Coordinator on the NSC Staff.

7. National Security Council Staff:

The National Security Council Staff performs the following duties:

a. Furnishes the secretariat for the Council, including the preparation of the agenda, record of

actions and status of projects; reproduces and distributes papers for the Council; and maintains the official Council files.

b. Acts as the official channel of communication for the Council, including notifying agencies of assignments to carry out approved policies.

c. Briefs the Vice President before each Council Meeting on matters covered by the agenda, and provides him with such other staff assistance on NSC matters as he may desire.

In addition, the NSC Staff has a small Special Staff to assist in performing, among others, the following duties:

a. Independent analysis and review of each Planning Board report before its submission to the Council by:

(1) Examination of all documents referred to in order to verify the reference.

(2) Examination of the report to determine that it states the issues comprehensively and clearly; that it develops the subject logically and presents, as a standard procedure, the alternative courses of action and the factors which support and which oppose each alternative; and that the conclusions reached are meaningful as operational guidances.

(3) Amendment of the report, in conformity with (1) and (2) above, before final approval and forwarding by the Planning Board.

b. Continuous examination of the totality of national security policies with a view to determining if gaps exist which should be filled and if important issues or anticipated developments are sufficiently explored.

c. Continuing integrated evaluation of the capabilities of the free world versus the capabilities of the Soviet Union and satellites, and estimates of the situation, in order to bring such evaluations and estimates before the Council.

d. Providing a chairman or member of, or observer with, ad hoc civilian or civilian-staff committees, and assistance in recruiting such committees.

e. Keeping currently informed on the status of all national security programs and seeing that reports and pertinent information thereon are currently available to the Council and the President.